

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 28-46 were pending prior to amendment. Claims 1-15 and 28-46 stand variously rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over one or more of U.S. Patent No. 4,828,392 to Nomura et al. ("Nomura"), admitted prior art, and U.S. Patent No. 6,118,516 to Ire et al. ("Ire"). Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112. Claim 4 is objected to. The drawings and specification stand objected to.

Please cancel claims 4 and 16-27, without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 15, and 28 are amended herein. Claims 1-3, 5-15, and 28-46 are pending after amendment.

In view of the amendments and remarks herein, the rejections are respectfully traversed. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

I. Allowable subject matter

The indication of allowable subject matter is gratefully acknowledged. Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the features of allowable claim 4, and is therefore in condition for allowance. Independent claim 28 has been amended to include similar features, and is therefore also allowable. Claims 2, 3, 5-15, and 29-46 depend from claims 1 and 28 respectfully, and are therefore in condition for allowance as well.

II. The Objections to the Abstract, Specification and Drawings

The abstract, specification, and drawings have been amended, rendering the objections moot.

III. The Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claim 15 has been amended, rendering the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112 moot.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed in this paper. However, failure to address a specific rejection, issue, or comment, does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above are not intended to be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Claims 1-3, 5-15, and 28-46 are in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this response, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (858) 678-4311.

Enclosed is a \$120.00 for the Petition for Extension of Time fee of one month. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement sheets of drawings includes changes to Figs. 1, 3, and 4 and replaces the original sheets including Figs. 1, 3, and 4.

In Figure 1, the legend "Prior Art" has been added and reference numeral 115 has been deleted. In Figure 3, a line from element 355 to element 380 has been added. In Figure 4, box 440 has been added, and the reference numerals have been corrected. The amendments are supported in the specification; therefore, no new matter is added.

Attachments following last page of this Amendment:

Replacement Sheet (3 pages)

Annotated Sheet Showing Change(s) (3 pages)

1/5

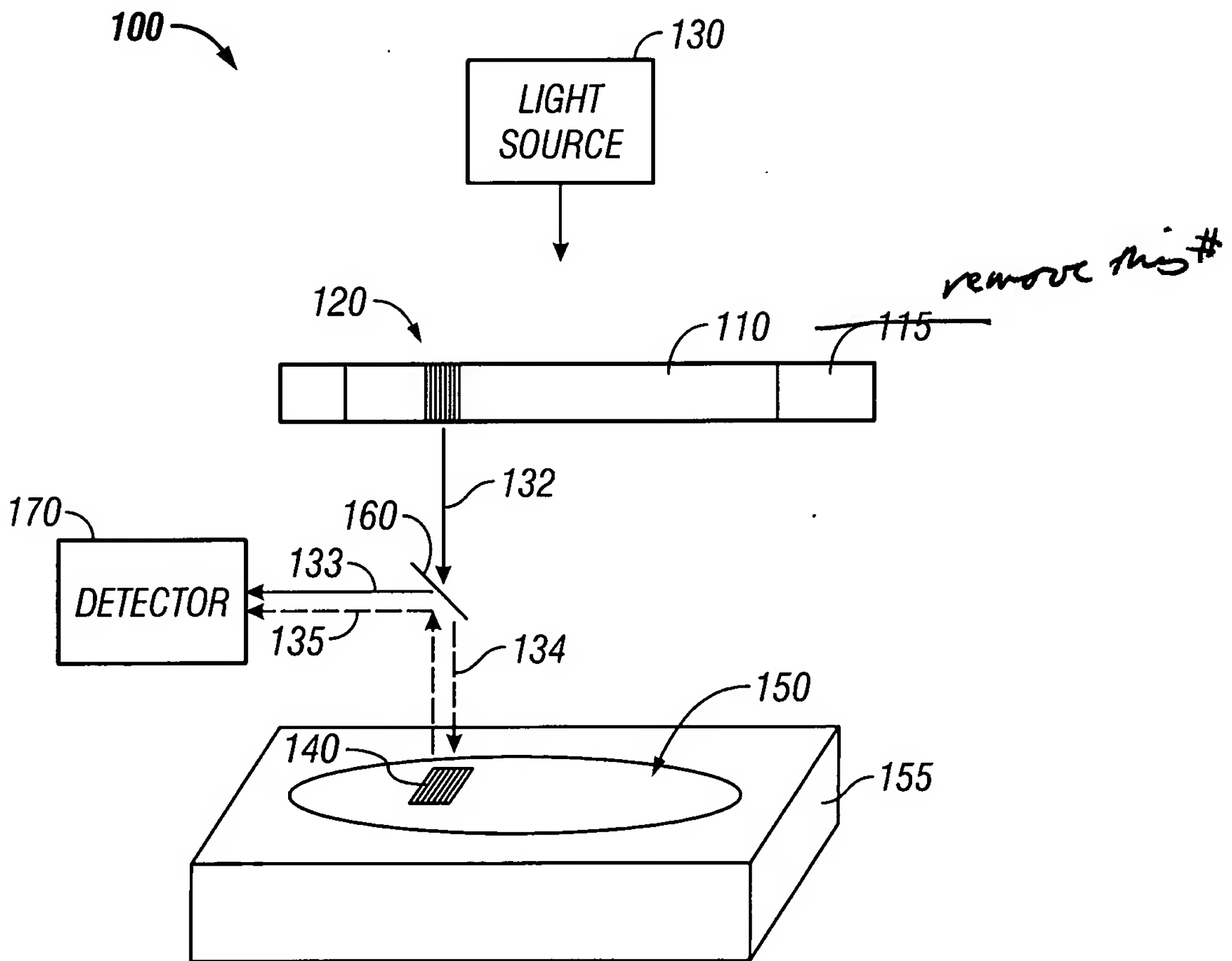


FIG. 1

Prior Art

3/5

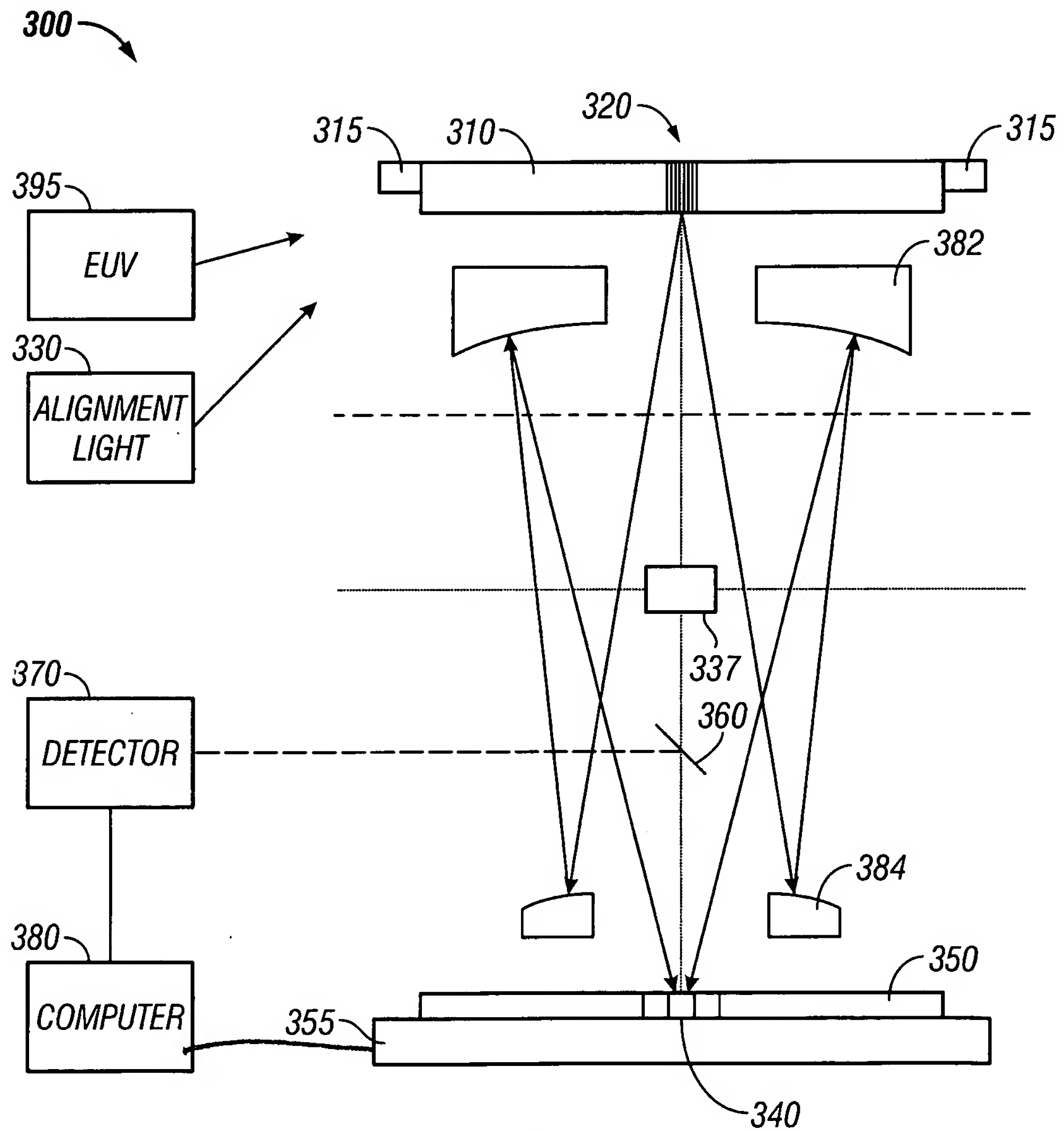


FIG. 3

4/5



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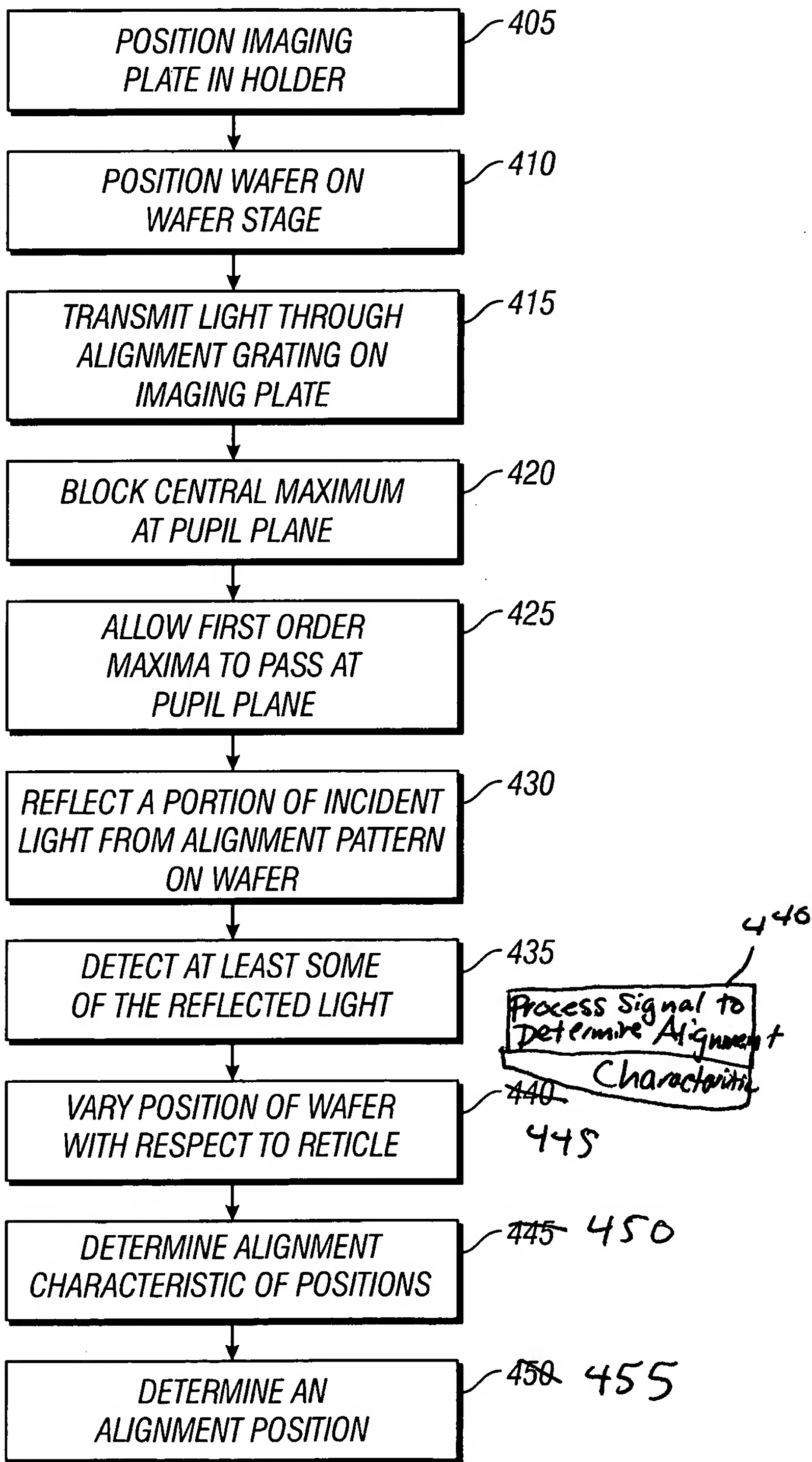


FIG. 4